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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNAU](#) [UNMIK](#) [YI](#) [EU](#) [GR](#)  
SUBJECT: KOSOVO: GREEK MFA ON STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

REF: A) STATE 136492 B) PRISTINA 687

Classified By: DCM TOM COUNTRYMAN. REASON: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: DCM met with the director of the MFA's Balkans unit, Ambassador Michael Christides, on August 29 to review ref a points on the Kosovo status negotiations. Christides -- who will meet with DAS DiCarlo in Washington the week of September 4 -- favored a "transition period" in order to prevent "radicalization" in Serbia and focused on the importance of a civilian mission with executive powers as part of an eventual settlement. Christides also suggested that "carrots" for the Serb side would make a settlement more palatable, noting that the GOG was already preparing a draft "action plan" for its own use with Serbia. FM Bakoyannis plans to travel to Belgrade and Pristina the week of September 11 in advance of her trip to the U.S.; Christides's visit to Washington will be an opportunity to influence her message. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) DCM outlined Ref A points, underscoring that there was no realistic alternative to an independent Kosovo in order to ensure stability in the region. The U.S. foresaw a Kosovo which would continue to be governed from Pristina, with substantial devolution of competencies to Serbian-majority principalities. Support from the international community -- including thorough a new civilian mission with sufficient executive powers to implement a settlement -- would be essential. But both sides needed to do more. Kosovar Albanians needed to increase their commitment to rule of law and protection of non-Albanian minorities; Belgrade needed to show more flexibility and encourage Kosovar Serbs to participate in institutions. He emphasized the role Greece could play in encouraging Belgrade to be more practical in the negotiations. Drawing on ref B, DCM pointed to U.S.-funded projects in three Serb municipalities as well as north Mitrovica, projects which had been greeted positively by community leaders.

CHRISTIDES: TRANSITION PERIOD IMPORTANT

13. (C) Christides agreed that Ahtisaari was likely to recommend some form of independence for Kosovo. But a transition period would be important -- not only to allow the Kosovars to confront immediate problems, but also to mitigate Serb "humiliation." Christides was concerned about Belgrade's reaction, citing creeping "radicalization" in Serbia. Above all, the international community should avoid giving the impression that it had tilted a solution toward the Kosovo Albanians because of the implicit threat of Albanian-instigated violence or because it believed a thwarted Belgrade would be less difficult to placate in the aftermath of a settlement.

FM TRAVEL TO BELGRADE, PRISTINA

14. (C) Christides argued that an "action plan" to help

Serbia would be essential. The Greek MFA has drafted a document outlining possible multilateral and bilateral initiatives. FM Bakoyannis planned to discuss the still-unfinished draft with Serb leaders during her upcoming visit to Pristina and Belgrade -- currently scheduled for the week of September 11 (prior to her travel to New York for the UNGA. Greece will be president of the Security Council during September.) Possible initiatives included raising the level of EU dialogue with Belgrade (for example, regular consultations with the Troika) and a more generous visa regime for travel to EU states. Serbia also needed to be brought into security fora, including via a closer relationship with NATO. Finally, Christides suggested an IC-sponsored "donor's conference" for Serbia to help it address its own economic issues.

15. (C) DCM questioned whether the GOG would be able to direct (or redirect) resources to help both the Serbian government and Kosovar Serbs. Christides claimed this was already happening; under Greece's Balkan regional development programs, funds for Serbia and Kosovo are being disbursed more rapidly than for other projects. Other possibilities (such as a seasonal employment agreement with Serbia) were under consideration. Clearly, carrots were needed to make a Kosovo status agreement more palatable to the Serb side. At the same time, the Kosovar Albanians must not appear to be making no concessions. For that reason, Christides particularly welcomed U.S. support for a civilian mission with executive powers as part of a Kosovo status settlement. Christides predicted that, as the status negotiation end-game approached, democratic forces in Serbia would need to show greater unity -- a message he expected FM Bakoyannis to deliver during her visit.

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